

# WESTERN HERO

A Fawcett Publication

MAR. NO. 112



TEX RITTER



TOM MIX

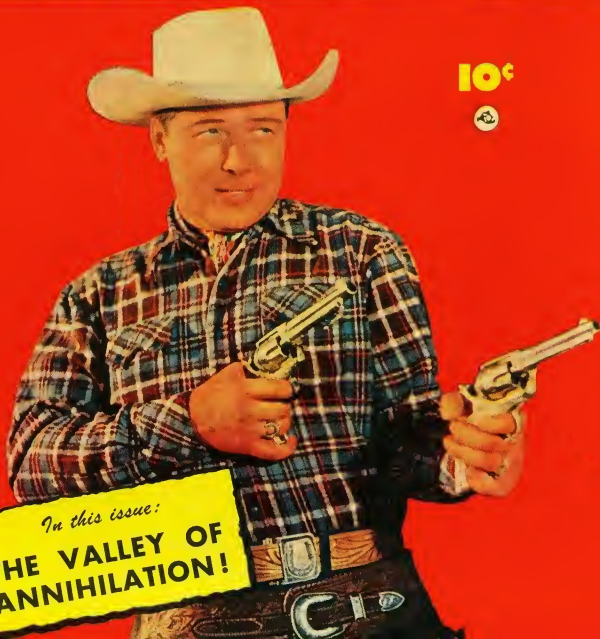


MONTE HALE



GABBY HAYES

10¢



*In this issue:*  
**THE VALLEY OF  
ANNIHILATION!**



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MOTION PICTURE COMICS • TEX RITTER WESTERN

Every effort is made to insure that these comic magazines contain the highest quality of wholesome entertainment.

*D. Fawcett, Jr. President*  
*Danny*





RELAX, FURY! RELAX!  
THAT STUPID HOMBRE  
ISN'T WORTH SINKING YOUR  
TEETH INTO!



OKAY,  
GEEFER,  
BEAT IT!

THANKS, TEX! SINCE IT'S  
MY FAULT FURY'S COL-  
LAR BROKE, THE LEAST  
I CAN DO IS FIX IT.  
FER YUH! BRING IT  
INTO THE PET SHOP  
WHERE I WORK AND  
I'LL TAKE CARE  
OF IT!



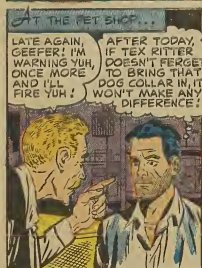
I'LL TAKE  
YOU UP ON  
THAT  
OFFER!

I WAS HOPING HE WOULD,  
I HAVEN'T BEEN RISKING  
MY HIDE ANNOYING THAT  
DOG FER NOTHING! I WAS  
AIMING AT FURY  
BREAKING THAT  
COLLAR!



THAT'S JUST WHAT I NEEDED  
TO CARRY OUT MY ROBBERY  
PLAN AND NOW I'LL HAVE A  
PRAIRIE RANGER  
WORKING FER ME  
EVEN IF HE  
DOESN'T  
REALIZE  
IT!

ROBBERY PLAN! AND TEX RITTER IS GOING TO  
HELP? JUST WHAT IS GEEFER UP TO?



AT THE PET SHOP...

LATE AGAIN,  
GEEFER! I'M  
WARNING YUH,  
ONCE MORE  
AND I'LL  
FIRE YUH!

AFTER TODAY,  
IF TEX RITTER  
DOESN'T FERGET  
TO BRING THAT  
DOG COLLAR IN, IT  
WON'T MAKE ANY  
DIFFERENCE!

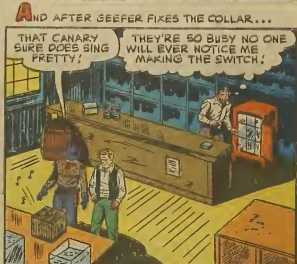
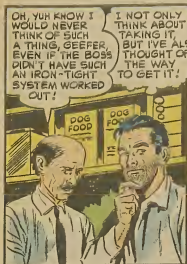


NOW GET  
TO WORK,  
GEEFER!

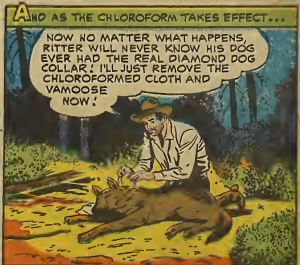
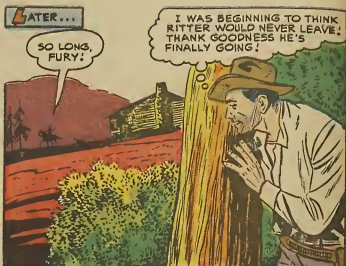
YES, MR.  
STRONG!

EVERY TIME I LOOK  
AT THAT DIAMOND-  
STUDDED DOG COLLAR  
IN THE SAFE, GEEFER,  
I BEGIN TO DREAM  
WHAT I WOULD  
DO IF I HAD ALL  
THE DOUGH IT'S  
WORTH!

WELL, YUH  
BETTER  
NOT  
DREAM  
ABOUT  
TAKING  
IT, BOB!  
DON'T  
FERGET,  
THE BOSS  
SEARCHES  
US EVERY  
NIGHT  
BEFORE  
WE LEAVE!







THE NEXT DAY...

THIS ISN'T MY DIAMOND DOG COLLAR! IT'S JUST A CHEAP IMITATION!

DON'T LOOK AT US, BOSS! YOU SEARCHED US BEFORE WE LEFT LAST NIGHT!

DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TEX RITTER TOOK THE WRONG COLLAR WITH HIM? THIS ONE LOOKS ENOUGH LIKE THE REAL DIAMOND ONE TO FOOL ANYONE BUT A DIAMOND EXPERT!

I FIGURED SOMEONE WOULD THINK OF THAT ONCE THEY LOOK AT FURY'S COLLAR AND SEE IT'S AN IMITATION, IT'LL END THAT LINE OF THOUGHT!

THAT IS A POSSIBILITY! I'LL GO LOOK UP RITTER, PRONTO!

AT TEX'S PLACE...

I'M AFRAID SOMEONE SNEAKED INTO MY SHOP AND MADE THE SWITCH LAST NIGHT, BUT HOW THEY OPENED THE SAFE WITHOUT BLASTING IT, I'LL NEVER KNOW! I'M THE ONLY ONE WITH THE COMBINATION!

DRAT IT! THAT ISN'T THE REAL DIAMOND COLLAR!

THAT DOG OF YORES DOESN'T SEEM TO LIKE ME!

FURY'S NOT ANGRY! HE'S TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING!

WHAT'S THAT?

A PATCH OF PANTS! AND FURY SEEMS MIGHTY ANXIOUS TO PICK UP THE OWNER'S SCENT!

A WILD THOUGHT JUST CAME TO ME, STRONG! PERHAPS I WAS GIVEN THE REAL DIAMOND DOG COLLAR WHEN I LEFT YOUR SHOP—BUT NOT BY MISTAKE!

I DON'T GET YUH, TEX! WHAT ARE YUH AIMIN' AT?

JUST THIS! IF ONE OF YOUR HELPERS WAS TRYING TO STEAL THE COLLAR, WHAT EASIER WAY WOULD HE HAVE HAD THAN TO LET ME CARRY IT OUT OF THE STORE AND THEN FOR HIM TO COME AROUND LATER AND SWITCH COLLARS ON FURY?

SAY, THAT DOES MAKE SENSE!



--AND SINCE I HAVE A GOOD IDEA WHO DID IT, THE NEXT THING TO DO IS FIND OUT HOW HE GOT FURY TO LET HIM MAKE THE SWITCH! LET'S GO!



SHORTLY AFTER, AT GEEFER'S CABIN...

CHLOROFORM! THAT COULD BE THE ANSWER! MAYBE IF I WORK FAST I CAN EVEN FIND THE DIAMOND DOG COLLAR. HIDDEN AROUND HERE BEFORE GEEFER RETURNS!



BUT SUDDENLY...

THIS MUST BE IT!

RITTER! I DON'T KNOW HOW YUH FIGGERED EVERYTHING OUT, BUT THE INFORMATION'S NOT GOING TO DO YUH ANY GOOD!



JUST THEN...

GOOD BOY, FURY!



I'LL TAKE OVER FROM HERE!

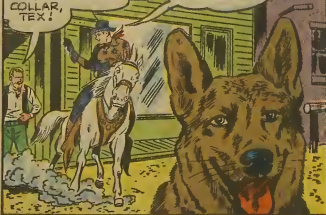
YOU'RE LIKE ALL THE OTHER CRIMINALS WHO THOUGHT THEY HAD DEVISED A PERFECT PLAN TO BEAT THE LAW! BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! ANYONE SMART ENOUGH TO THINK UP SUCH A PLAN SHOULD ALSO BE SMART ENOUGH NOT TO BE AN OUTLAW!



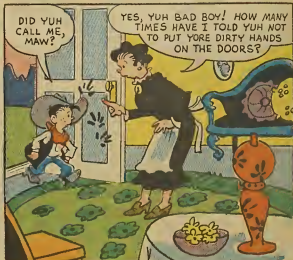
LATER...

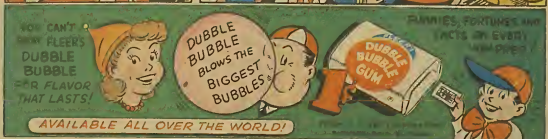
THANKS FER LOCKING UP GEEFER AND RETURNING MY DIAMOND DOG COLLAR, TEX!

THANK FURY! HE REALLY DID ALL THE WORK IN THIS CASE!









**BOYS! GIRLS! LOOK!**

Get this **24 K GOLD-PLATED GOOD LUCK RING**

With **YOUR OWN INITIALS!**

**BIG! AMAZING VALUE! NEVER BEFORE OFFERED!**

**MASSIVE! EVERY RING MADE TO ORDER!!**

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WITH FRONT COVER OF ANY SMITH BROTHERS BOX  
Send to SMITH BROTHERS,  
Box 424, Providence, R. I.

**EASY TO GET! LUCKY TO WEAR!**  
Yes, it's lucky to wear a ring with your own initials! And everyone will ask, "Where did you get it?"—when they see your beautiful big gold-plated ring with your own initials in massive letters! And what a value—only 25¢, plus front panel of any Smith Bros. box. Limited supply—hurry!

**AND THE BEST TASTING COUGH DROPS, TOO!**

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I am enclosing 25¢ plus the front panel of one Smith Brothers box, any flavor, for which please send me the "Good Luck" Ring with my initials.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE PRINT WITH PENCIL)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

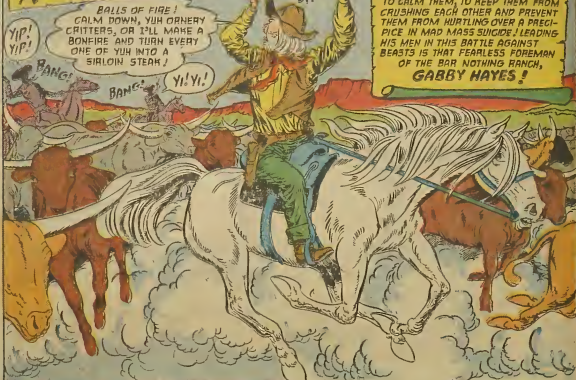
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Initials for Ring \_\_\_\_\_ (FIRST) (LAST)

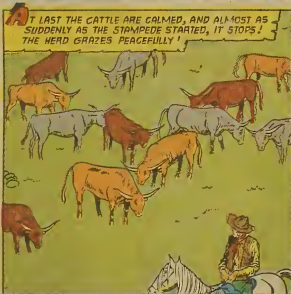
Send to Smith Bros., P.O. Box 424, Providence, R. I.

# GABBY HAYES

in  
**A LOT OF BULL**



**STAMPEDE!** FRENZIED CATTLE RUNNING WILD! HARD-RIDING COWHANDS DARING DEATH TO TURN THEM TO CALM THEM, TO KEEP THEM FROM CRUSHING EACH OTHER AND PREVENT THEM FROM HURLING OVER A PRECIPICE IN MAD MASS SUICIDE! LEADING HIS MEN IN THIS BATTLE AGAINST BEASTS IS THAT FEARLESS FOREMAN OF THE BAR NOTHING RANCH, **GABBY HAYES!**



**A**T LAST THE CATTLE ARE CALMED, AND ALMOST AS SUDDENLY AS THE STAMPEDE STARTED, IT STOPS! THE HERD GRAZES PEACEFULLY!

WELL, GABBY, WE WERE LUCKY! DIDN'T LOSE MORE THAN TWENTY HEAD!

THAT'S GOOD! WHEW! I THOUGHT FOR AWHILE WE'D LOSE EVERY HEAD, INCLUDING MINE! SAY, WHAT'S THAT?





IT'S A LITTLE DOGIE!

POOR GRITTER, MUST'VE LOST HIS MAW IN THE STAMPEDE!



COME ON, BABY! I'LL TOTE YUH TO THE RANCH HOUSE AND GIVE YUH SOME MILK! THE LI'L GRITTER'S KISSING ME!

AS GABBY PICKS UP THE MOTHER-LESS CALF, THE SPIRIT OF TERRIBLE TROUBLE LOOKS DOWN FROM THE CLOUDS AND CACKLES!

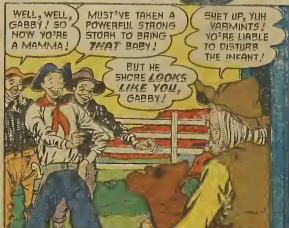
YOU'LL BE SORRY, GABBY! NEH-NEH-NEH! THAT BABY COW IS GOING TO GET YOU INTO AN AWFUL MESS! YUKKLE, YUKKLE!



BUT GABBY IS UNAWARE OF THE DIRE PROPHECY BY THE EVIL SPIRIT, AND SO, A LITTLE LATER....

ISN'T HE CUTE, HESTER?

HUMPH!



WELL, WELL, GABBY! SO NOW YOU'RE A MAMMA!

MUST'VE TAKEN A POWERFUL STRONG STORM TO BRING THAT BABY!

SHEET UP, YUH YARMINTS! YOU'RE LIABLE TO DISTURB THE INFANT!

BUT HE SURE LOOKS LIKE YOU, GABBY!



LOOK, HESTER! THAT DOGIE FOLLOWS GABBY AROUND JUST LIKE A HOUND DOG!

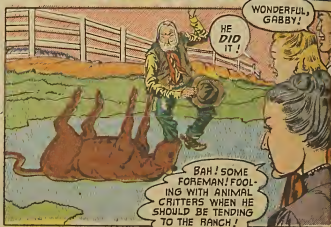
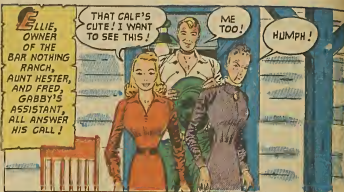
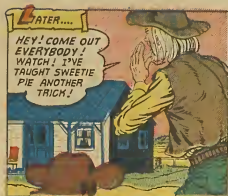
I DECLARE, I NEVER SAW THE PRAT OF IT!

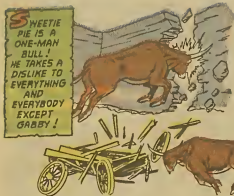


GABBY HAS TAUGHT HIS PET A FEW TRICKS!

SIT UP, SWEETIE PIE! SIT UP!







**S**WEETIE PIE IS A ONE-MAN BULL! HE TAKES A DISLIKE TO EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY EXCEPT GABBY!



**H**E EVEN CHASES AUNT HESTER!  
**EEEEEEK! HELP! HELP!**



WHOA, SWEETIE PIE! SIT DOWN! DON'T BE A-FEERED, HESTER! HE'S AS GENTLE AS A LAMB!

GENTLE? WHY THAT VICIOUS BRUTE WAS AIMING TO STAB ME TO DEATH!



THIS IS THE LIMIT, ELLIE! EITHER THAT BULL GOES OR I GO!

YOU'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF THE BULL, GABBY! IT'S NOT SAFE TO HAVE HIM AROUND!

BUT, SHUCKS, ELLIE, SWEETIE PIE ISN'T MEAN! HE'S ONLY PLAYFUL, AND...



**L**ATER....

GET IN THE BOXCAR, SWEETIE PIE! I LOST MY ARGUMENT WITH ELLIE AND HESTER -- AS USUAL!



SO LONG, OLD PAL!

JOSE, THAT WAS ONE FINE BULL!

HE APPEARED TO BE THE KING OF BULLS, MIGUEL! I WONDER IF HE IS AS STRONG AS HE LOOKED!



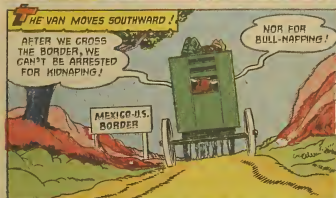
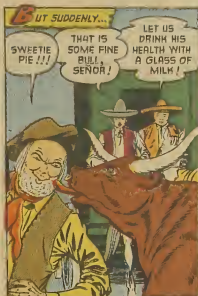
GABBY IS BARELY OUT OF SIGHT WHEN....

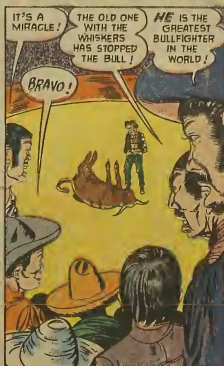
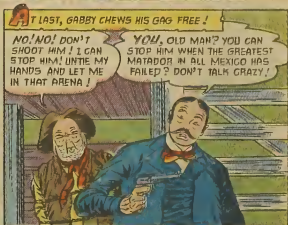
**RIP!**  
**CRASH!**

BEHOLD, JOSE! HE IS EVEN STRONGER THAN HE LOOKED!



I WISH I HADN'T SENT SWEETIE PIE AWAY! MAKES ME FEEL LIKE A BLASTED TRAITOR!







# TOM MIX

## in The Valley Of Annihilation





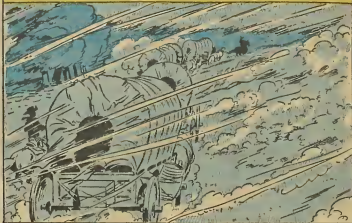
BUT THEY RIDE RIGHT INTO  
A DUST STORM ---

THAT WIND  
HAS TURNED THIS  
INTO A DUST  
STORM! WHAT  
ARE WE GOING  
TO DO, TOM?

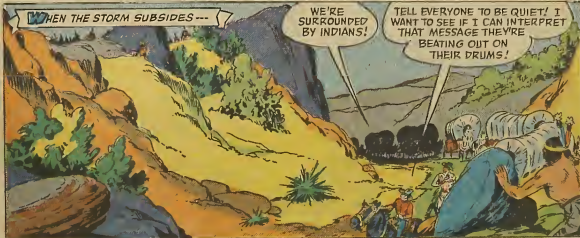
THERE'S ONLY ONE  
THINK WE CAN DO  
UNDER THE  
CIRCUMSTANCES--  
TRY TO RIDE  
THROUGH IT!



BUT TRY AS THEY MIGHT, THE VALIANT SETTLERS CAN MAKE  
NO HEADWAY IN THE BLINDING DUST STORM!



WHEN THE STORM SUBSIDES ---



WE'RE  
SURROUNDED  
BY INDIANS!

TELL EVERYONE 'TO BE QUIET! I  
WANT TO SEE IF I CAN INTERPRET  
THAT MESSAGE THEY'RE  
BEATING OUT ON  
THEIR DRUMS!

IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN,  
THEIR CHIEF IS OUT HUNTING  
AND THEY'RE SENDING FOR HIM  
SO HE CAN LEAD THEM AGAINST  
EVIL PALEFACES!



EVIL PALEFACES! THIS IS ALL  
MY FAULT! I'D GLADLY GIVE  
MYSELF UP TO THEM  
IF THEY'D LET THE  
REST OF YUH  
GO!

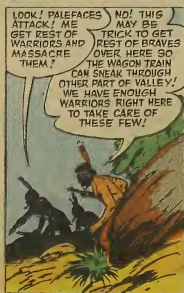
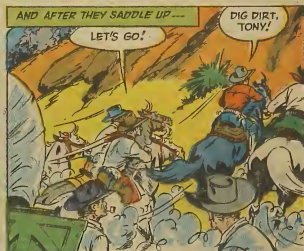
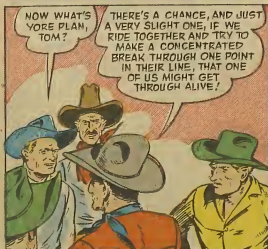
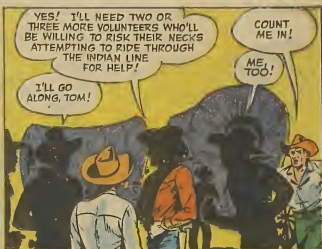
WE WOULDN'T  
LET YUH DO THAT!  
I KNOW YO'RE  
SORRY FER THE  
BONER YUH  
PULLED!



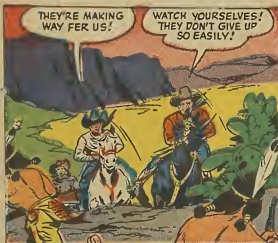
IF ANY OF US ARE GOING  
TO GET OUT OF HERE  
ALIVE, WE'VE GOT  
TO GET HELP  
BEFORE THEIR  
CHIEF  
ARRIVES!

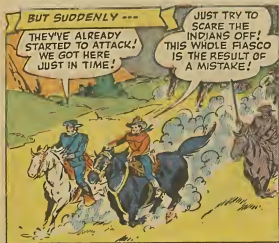
BUT THAT'S  
IMPOSSIBLE!  
TO REACH THE  
NEAREST TOWN, YUH'D  
HAVE TO RIDE  
THROUGH THOSE  
INDIANS! NO ONE  
WOULD EVER GET  
THROUGH  
ALIVE!











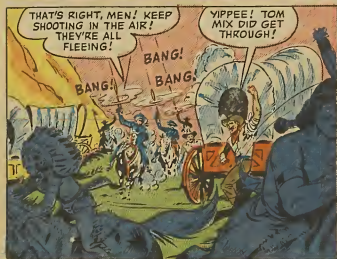
**BUT SUDDENLY ---**

THEY'VE ALREADY  
STARTED TO ATTACK!  
WE GOT HERE  
JUST IN TIME!

JUST TRY TO  
SCARE THE  
INDIANS OFF!  
THIS WHOLE FIASCO  
IS THE RESULT OF  
A MISTAKE!



CAVALRY MEN!  
WE NO MATCH FOR  
SO MANY SHOOTING  
IRONS!

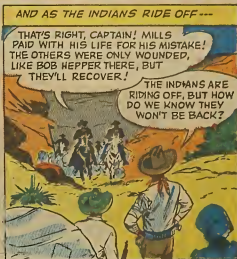


THAT'S RIGHT, MEN! KEEP  
SHOOTING IN THE AIR!  
THEY'RE ALL  
FLEEING!

YIPPEE! TOM  
MIX DID GET  
THROUGH!

BANG!

BANG!



**AND AS THE INDIANS RIDE OFF ---**

THAT'S RIGHT, CAPTAIN! MILLS  
PAID WITH HIS LIFE FOR HIS MISTAKE!  
THE OTHERS WERE ONLY WOUNDED,  
LIKE BOB HEPPER THERE, BUT  
THEY'LL RECOVER!

THE INDIANS ARE  
RIDING OFF, BUT HOW  
DO WE KNOW THEY  
WON'T BE BACK?



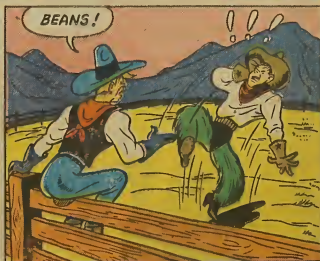
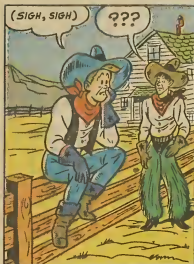
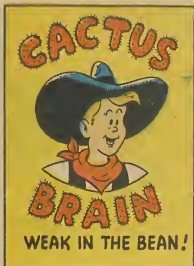
BECAUSE  
WE'LL RIDE  
ALONG WITH  
YOU TO  
THE NEW  
SETTLEMENT!

IN THAT CASE, MY  
SERVICES WILL NO  
LONGER BE NEEDED!  
I MIGHT AS WELL HEAD  
BACK FOR DOBIE AND  
GET TO WORK ON  
MY RANCH!



THANKS FOR EVERYTHING,  
TOM! IF IT WEREN'T FER  
YUH, WE'D NEVER HAVE  
MADE IT!

DON'T THANK ME, HEPPER! JUST  
SET UP AN HONEST AND THRIVING  
COMMUNITY AND THE WHOLE COUNTRY  
WILL BE THANKING YOU PIONEERS!  
SO LONG NOW!



# TALLYMAN TROUBLE

*A Slim Carson Story*

*By Dick Kraus*

THE BAWLING OF frightened cattle filled the acrid, dust-strewn air of the depot town. Everywhere, market-bound steers were being driven by hoarse voiced cowmen up swaying ramps, into slatted cars for eastern shipment. It was a busy time, for the ranchers of three Texas counties had brought their herds into the railroad center of San Cabrillo. And it was a time when Slim Carson usually had his hands full. Bringing cattle to market meant that there were plenty of silver dollars made. And wherever easy money was to be found, gun-ready men were out to get it!

But now, young Slim Carson was involved in a different kind of problem from gambling or street holdups. Instead, he had just been approached by an old cattleman who had been a friend of his father's, white-haired, leathery-faced Wade Slocum.

"Slim," Slocum began, "I've got a knot here that'll take a heap of figgering to untangle! Mebbe you're the critter that can do it . . ."

"Shoot, Wade," Slim nodded. "I'll be glad to help—if I can!"

"Well, it looks to me like a case of cattle rustling, pure and simple," Wade Slocum said, scratching his bony jaw reflectively. "Simple, that is, except that I can't for the life of me figger out how it was done! Down at the Big S spread, four days ago, we set out for market with twelve hundred head of steers. Today we got in—and the count is nine hundred! Three hundred head missing somewhere along the line! But where—and how?"

Slim's brow furrowed in thought. "You're sure there weren't any storms that might have caused your beefs to skedaddle? Or any river crossings where they might have been swept away?"

Wade Slocum shook his head. "Nary a one! Weather was perfect—and our only crossing was shallow and easy! We couldn't have lost

more than one or two mavericks . . . if any!"

Slim shrugged his shoulders. "Wade," he said, "seems to me like there's just one thing to do! S'pose you leave your cattle here, with the rest of your boys, and we backtrack along your trail! If it took the herd four days, we ought to be able to do it in one—riding real fast! And we'll see if there are any side tracks, indicating where those three hundred head might have been driven off—if that's what happened!"

Setting out at once, the young border rider and the older rancher galloped swiftly back along the trail. Keen eyes combing the bordering terrain, they searched eagerly for any sign of what might have happened to the missing steers. That night they reached the Big S spread, and the next day they rode back to San Cabrillo. But nowhere along the route did they discover any sign showing where cattle might have been driven from the main herd!

"You see!" Wade Slocum husked, as they came within sight of the railroad depot town again, early that evening. "Now what, Slim?"

The border patrolman reined in, his voice thoughtful. "Hold on, Wade," he said. "You reckoned that you had three hundred missing, because you only had nine hundred when the herd reached San Cabrillo. But how come you're so sure you had twelve hundred head when you set out? Couldn't that figure have been wrong?"

Wade Slocum scoffed, "By three hundred? No, sir! I had a tallyman counting each head as we moved them into the corrals at round-up time. He couldn't have been that far off, unless he wanted to be!"

"Wade," Slim Carson asked, "who is your tallyman?"

"Big feller I just hired a while ago," the rancher replied. "Name of Ringo Daly—from up in the Dakota country. Just wanted to work



this one drive, so I reckon he'll be quitting soon. But what'd be the sense of his giving me a fake count . . . especially an overcount?"

Slim slammed one fist into the other. "Plenty of sense," he replied excitedly. "If Daly had some buddies who were running your cattle off your home range, he could keep you from getting suspicious by giving you a full count of twelve hundred at tally-time! Then, when you got to San Cabrillo, you'd figger the cattle were lost along the trail! Meanwhile, his buddies could take the beefs up to the army post at Fort McShawn and sell them to the quartermaster there!"

"Great Day!" muttered Wade Slocum angrily! "It could be! But how can we prove it? There's no way to check on whether Ringo Daly's tally was right or wrong!"

Slim grinned. "You said he was aiming to quit! Let him. If my hunch is right, he's going to rejoin his buddies somewhere in the vicinity and they'll be riding to work this racket somewhere else! The border country is filled with rannies of their stripe! But meanwhile, I'll tail your tallyman . . . and we'll see what I find!"

That night, Ringo Daly drew his pay for the cattle drive and quit the Big S outfit. A husky, beetlebrowed hombre, straddling a rangy buckskin cayuse, he headed out on the mountain trail that led from San Cabrillo toward the North Texas country. Cautiously, Daly scanned the trail behind him from time to time, to see if he was being followed. But he did not see the single rider who trailed at a distance, and far out to the right of him. And, gradually gaining more confidence, he ended by not watching the trail behind him at all . . .

Through the night the erstwhile tallyman for the Big S rode, and for part of the next morning.

Then, guiding his buckskin up a winding path, Daly halted when he came to three red standstone rocks that pointed up to the skies, side by side. He uttered a shrill whistle and

waited. From behind the rocks appeared two other men, both unshaven and heavily armed. They grinned at him.

"Howdy, Ringo," one of them grunted. "See yuh made it without trouble. Old Slocum didn't suspect anything!"

"Not a thing!" Ringo Daly dismounted, laughing raucously. "He swallowed my tally—and figgered he'd lost the cattle during the drive! Which enabled you gents to make an easy getaway. How'd you make out?"

"Jest fine!" husked the other badman. "We altered the brand the first night. Then we sold 'em all to the army commissary in Fort McShawn and hightailed it down here to meet you! We reckoned we'd—"

The rustler's words choked off as a tall, lean hombre sprang from behind one of the sandstone boulders, revolvers leveled.

"Raise your paws!" Slim commanded. "Prono, or I'll alter *your* brand!"

For a brief moment, the badmen froze. Then, seeing that Slim was alone, Ringo Daly dove for his guns. "Riddle him, boys!" the ex-tallyman muttered, his weapons coming up fast! But Daly did not figure on the speed of Slim Carson. Before the outlaw's gun's could spit flame, the lawman's black-holstered Colts lined lead at him. Daly spun like a top, toppled backward. He shuddered once and lay still, sightless eyes staring skyward!

**S**LIM whirled toward the other outlaws! Both of them had whipped their guns from their holsters. But, seeing Daly slump to the sun-baked terrain, their fingers loosened, and their guns dropped. Quickly, their hands shot up . . .

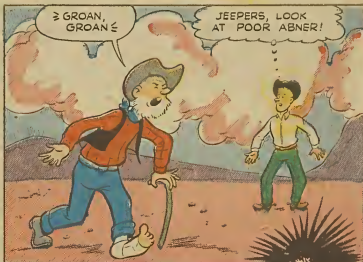
"Good enough," Slim grunted. He nodded at Ringo Daly's sprawled form. "Pick him up," he ordered. "Sling him on a horse—and you two, fork your own! We're heading down to San Cabrillo to pay Wade Slocum what he's owed and then to tell the sheriff a little story!"

THE END

*Hit the trail with SLIM CARSON each month in WESTERN HERO*

# WAGONWHEELS

--A DARK VIEW!



≥ GROAN,  
GROAN

JEEPERS, LOOK  
AT POOR ABNER!



WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO YOUR  
FOOT?

≥ GROAN I  
STUBBED IT  
AGAINST A  
CHAIR IN THE  
DARK LAST  
NIGHT!



YUH MEAN  
YUH COULDN'T  
SEE THE  
CHAIR?

OF COURSE  
NOT! IT  
WAS TOO  
DARK!



YOU SHOULD BE  
LIKE MY BROTHER!  
HE CAN SEE  
PERFECTLY IN  
THE DARK!

IS  
THAT  
SO?



YEP! AND IT'S  
NOT BECAUSE  
HE HAS SUCH  
GOOD EYE-  
SIGHT EITHER!

NO! THEN HOW  
COME HE CAN  
SEE SO WELL  
IN THE DARK?

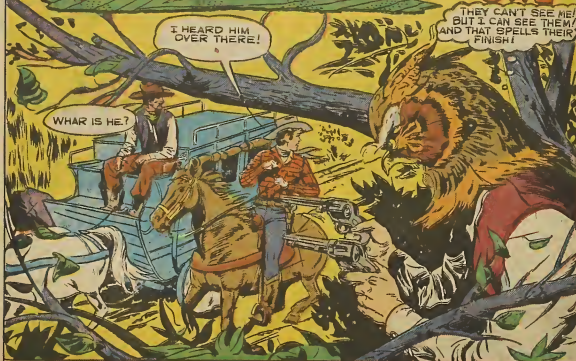


HE HAS A  
**LANTERN JAW!**  
HA, HA!

≥ GASP!!!

# MONTE HALE

## BATTLES THE OWL



I HEARD HIM OVER THERE!

WHAT IS HE?

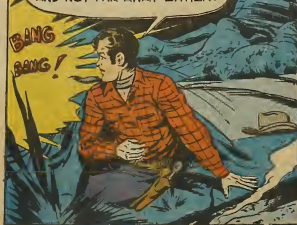
THEY CAN'T SEE ME! BUT I CAN SEE THEM! AND THAT SPELLS THEIR FINISH!

THEY CALLED HIM THE OWL... AND WITH GOOD REASON! FOR THIS STRANGEST OF ALL OUTLAWS COULD ACTUALLY SEE IN THE DARK! CAN EVEN THE GIANT COWBOY MONTE HALE, MATCH THUDDING FISTS AND BLAZING SIX-GUNS AGAINST AN OPPONENT HE CANNOT SEE? WHO WILL WIN THE BATTLE OF DARKNESS WHEN MONTE HALE... **BATTLES THE OWL!**

ON A DARK, MOONLESS NIGHT, MONTE HALE IS BEDDED DOWN ON THE PRAIRIE WHEN...

SOMEONE'S SHOOTING... AND NOT FAR AWAY EITHER!

BANG  
BANG!

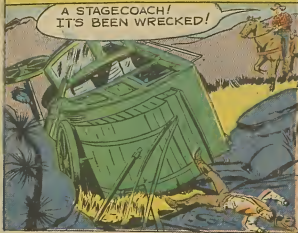


WHAT KIND OF TARGET CAN AN HOMRE FIND TO SHOOT AT ON A DARK NIGHT LIKE THIS? LET'S FIND OUT, PARDNER!

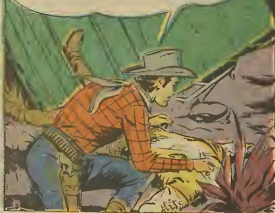


GUIDED BY PARDNER'S UNERRING  
INSTINCT, MONTE HALE COMES UPON  
THE SCENE OF DISASTER!

A STAGECOACH!  
IT'S BEEN WRECKED!



I RECKON I CAN FIGURE  
WHAT HAPPENED! THE DRIVER  
WAS AMBUSHED! SHOT RIGHT  
BETWEEN THE EYES! WHEN HE  
LET GO OF THE REINS, THE  
COACH TURNED OVER!



BUT WHO COULD'VE SHOT  
THE DRIVER IN THIS DARK-  
NESS? IT TAKES A MIGHTY  
FINE MARKSMAN TO PICK OFF  
AN HOMBRE RIDING THE  
DRIVER'S SEAT OF A STAGECOACH  
IN THE DAYTIME! AT  
NIGHT IT WOULD BE  
IMPOSSIBLE!



WHAT WAS THAT?  
SOUNDED LIKE AN OWL'S  
HOOT! BUT IT WAS A  
HUMAN VOICE!



SUDDENLY TWO SHOTS  
BLAZE OUT OF THE  
NIGHT!

EYOW! HE SHOT  
THE GUNS RIGHT OUT  
OF MY HANDS!



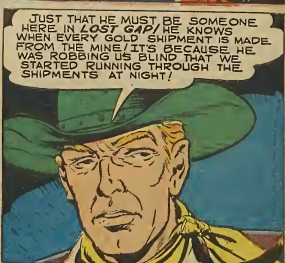
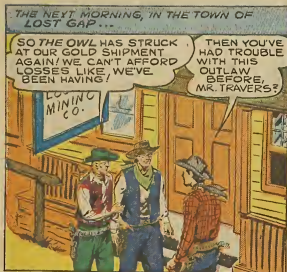
THERE HE GOES, PARDNER-- RIDING  
OFF! IT WOULD BE PLUMB SUICIDE  
TO FOLLOW HIM! HE COULD GUN US  
DOWN AFORE WE EVEN GOT CLOSE!

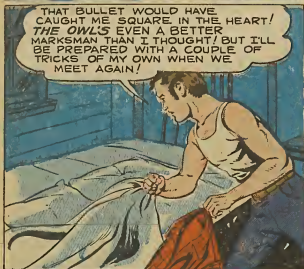
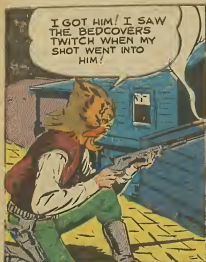


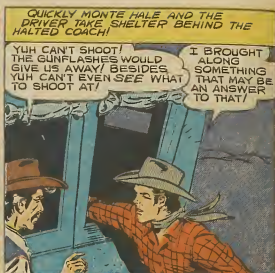
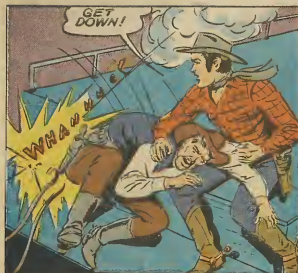
I RECKON I KNOW NOW WHY  
THIS STAGECOACH WAS HELD UP!  
I MIGHT AS WELL TELL THE OWNER  
THE BAD NEWS!









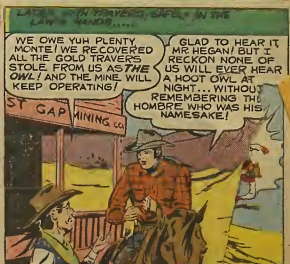
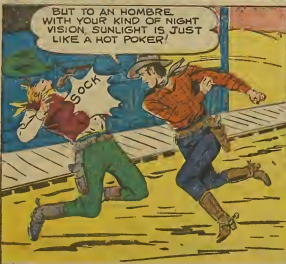
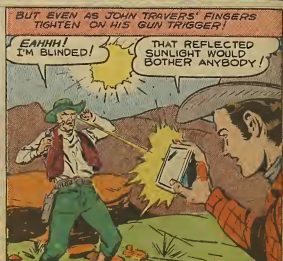
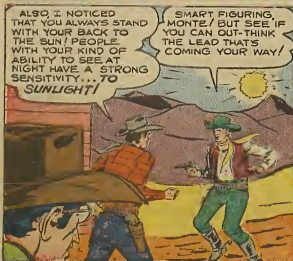
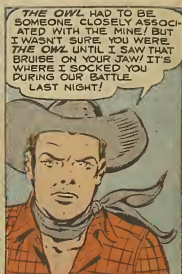
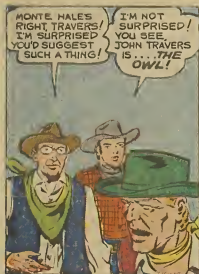




LATER, AS A DAZED MONTE HALE RETURNS...







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playing. Nylon  
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